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### Raid to the north.

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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

RAID TO THE NORTH

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Of Master of Arts

Department of History

By

William Woodrow Slider

Year

1946

NAME OF STUDENT: William Woodrow Slider

TITLE OF THESIS: Raid to the North

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APPROVED BY READING COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE  
FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

W. C. Mallalieu

Laurence Lee Howe

Mary E. Burton

NAME OF DIRECTOR: W. C. Mallalieu

DATE: Dec. 18, 1946

TO

My Father and Mother

John W. Slider and Mamie Osman Slider

In Sincere

Appreciation

RAID TO THE NORTH

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## INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

The Army of the United States has recently announced the incorporation of all cavalry units into the Armored Force. The Horse Cavalry as a separate arm will cease to exist except for one regiment to be kept for show purposes. It is with a touch of nostalgia that we see the end of an arm of the Services which has been tried over and over again in the heat of battle and has distinguished itself forever in the halls of history. The Custers, Stuarts, Sheridans, and Greens have ridden into Valhalla never to be reincarnated.

It is in part with a wistful glance at the past and a desire to pay honor to a gallant service that I write upon the subject of one of the most outstanding cavalry leaders produced, not only in this country but in the history of warfare. Sentiment alone is not the reason for this study, but the desire for an understanding of military history and the development of tactics are other important reasons.

It is an unquestionable fact that cavalry played an important part in the American Civil War.

"These...cavalry men were not only to serve as scouts, but to act as infantry, to cover military movements, to destroy the lines of communication, to burn stores, to tear up lines of railway, to gather supplies, to



fight gunboats, capture transports; all these without equipment of any kind except their horses, their arms and some horse artillery of limited range." (1)

The story of John Morgan holds a certain fascination because of his introduction of the "lightning war". It was he who originated the penetrating sweep into enemy territory, hold if you can, fall back if necessary. He drove a spear head into opposing country and then from that central thrust sent out many smaller detachments in order to completely disrupt their communications and strategy.

In John Hunt Morgan we also find several other points of interest. Under his command were many of the men of Kentucky who went to war for the South. He made two raids of over a thousand miles into enemy territory and carried the war farther into the North than any other general. (2) This phase of the Confederate cavalry is of interest, too, because of the underlying military plan which sent Morgan on his famous raid. Much is written of the activities of Northern troops in the Confederacy, and here we find an instance of comparison on Morgan's regiments as they rode through the north.

In this study of Morgan we also find marvelous records of endurance and marching. It is possible that he made the longest sustained march in the history of

(1) Young, Bennett H., Confederate Wizards of the Saddle, 1906, p.4

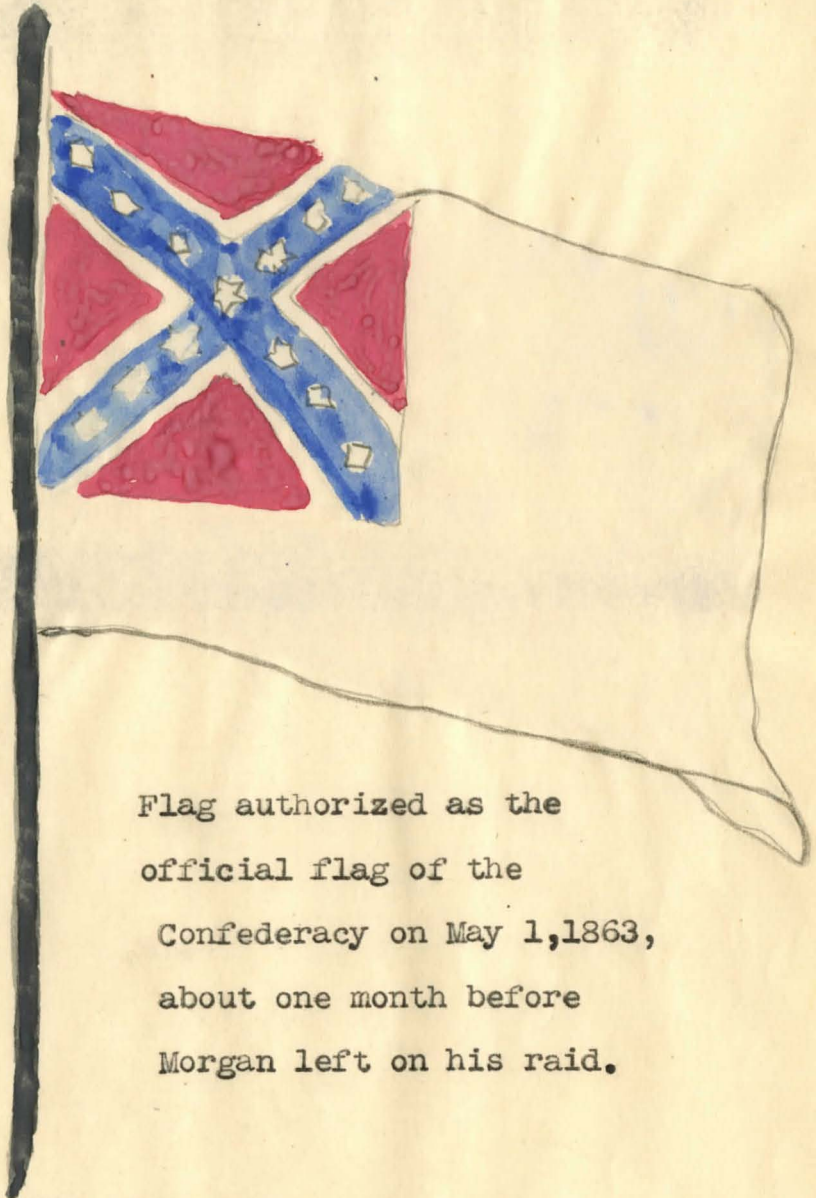
(2) There is a memorial at New Lisbon, Ohio indicating this.

the world. True, Ghenghis Khan's Orkhons, Subotai and Chepe Noyon, covered 4,000 miles with 20,000 men, but not in a sustained march.

The reception of the raiders in Indiana and Ohio also sheds light on the state of feeling in the North. Many are persuaded that the Copperhead and Anti-War element in the North were tremendous and far reaching. The grim reception given Morgan is one of the only genuine indicators of the real feeling in the North. At Cinénnati alone "three times during the night the General changed guides, and each time it was necessary by open or covert threat to force an enemy to lead the column". (1)

Finally, Morgan's raid is and will probably forever remain a part of folklore of the War of the Rebellion. It is told and retold in a hundred different ways. Confusion and error creep in which malign one side or the other. What is the real story? The following pages will try to tell it.

(1) Young, p.385



Flag authorized as the  
official flag of the  
Confederacy on May 1, 1863,  
about one month before  
Morgan left on his raid.

## CHAPTER I

### THE THUNDERBOLT OF THE CONFEDERACY

"There was in Morgan and his deeds something appealing to the people... He was killed on a rain-swept morning during the closing months of the war; after that the pride and the spirit of the people were never quite the same again." (1) It is true that the tide of John Morgan's success seemed to parallel that of the cause which he represented.

John Hunt Morgan was born in Alabama at Huntsville, June 1, 1825. When John was four the family moved to Lexington, Kentucky and here his early training was received. At seventeen he was admitted to Transylvania, but was suspended at the end of the second year for some altercation, the exact nature of which Holland, in Morgan and His Raiders, does not mention.

After leaving the school he spent his time in the general pastimes of ante-bellum Kentucky; dancing, duelling, drinking. There were many social activities to interest the blue-bloods of the area and they had little trouble finding means to occupy their time.

Then came 1846 and war with Mexico. John Morgan was 21 and eager for the soldier's life. With his younger brother, Calvin, Morgan enlisted in O.H.P. Beard's

(1) Holland, Cecil Fletcher, Morgan and His Raiders, 1942, p.17

Company, First Kentucky (Marshall's) cavalry. John was made Lieutenant before reaching Louisville, where the troops embarked for Memphis. In Mexico John Morgan conducted himself gallantly in the Battle of Buena Vista and was returned home in 1847. Back in Lexington Morgan went into business in the woolen industry and also dabbled in slaves. In 1848 he married Rebecca Gratz Bruce and to them one child was born which soon died; the wife was left an invalid and died in 1862.

In 1857 John organized the Lexington Rifles and became their captain. They were a well drilled and equipped company which attracted considerable attention. He was very active in Lexington public life, was a member of the Episcopalian Church, a Mason, a "Breckenridge" Democrat and Captain of the Union Volunteer Fire Company.

In January, 1861 Morgan received a note from Buckner, State Adjutant, asking how many men he could furnish from the Rifles. Morgan answered the Lieutenant General that they had 50 guns and 60 men. The Company continued drilling through the following months when Unionist and Southerner fought for the support of Kentucky with the resultant neutral position. April, 1861 brought the cannonade of Fort Sumter and four days later, on the 16th, Morgan sent the following to President Jefferson Davis: "Twenty thousand men can be raised to defend southern liberty against northern conquest. Do you want them?"<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Johnson, J. Stoddard, Confederate Military History,  
Volumn IX, p.250

No answer was received. Perhaps Jefferson Davis had too many things on his mind at that date to worry much about Kentucky. The Federal Government did ...and Camp Dick Robinson was set up near Lexington to receive Union recruits, gaining many for their cause.

On June 8th, 1861 Buckner, commanding the Kentucky State Forces, entered into neutrality Agreements with McClellan for the Union and Governor Harris of Tennessee. Morgan's impatience grew with the tide of battles and finally on the night of September 20th, 1861, he stole out of Lexington with most of his men and arms and went to Bowling Green, the Confederate rallying point in Kentucky.

As Captain of Cavalry the general duty that fell to John Hunt was scouting, which occupied him for most of the first year of the war. In these scouting forays he proved very adept and made quite a reputation in daring undertakings of smaller calibre. He captured the small town of Gallitin and, subsequently, on April 4, 1862 he was made a Colonel. Meanwhile, Union Forces under Grant and Buell advanced up the Tennessee River. Five divisions were at Pittsburg Landing, 23 miles from Confederate headquarters.

On the morning of April 6th, 1862 at five o'clock the battle of Shiloh commenced. It originated in the determination of A. S. Johnston to strike Grant at Pittsburg Landing in Tennessee before he could be joined by Buell's army in force. Johnston moved his Gray forces

from Corinth and the two armies met at a log chapel called Shiloh.

The Union troops were dispersed in an area surrounding the landing with little thought of an attack. The Confederate advance took them by surprise, by all evidence. The Southern troops were arranged in three lines extending from the Owl to Lick Creek:

"The first line was the Corps of Hardee... A second also stretching across the field, was commanded by Major-General Braxton Bragg... half a mile behind Bragg's left came the corps of Leonidas Polk, while John C. Breckenridge's reserve division formed the rest of the third line coming up behind Bragg's right." (1)

"The cavalry was promiscuously disposed- indeed no one in authority seemed to think it could win the battle. Morgan's Squadron was formed with the Kentucky Troops and occupied the extreme left of Breckenridge's division." (2)

The Confederates swept the Union Troops gradually into a pocket about the Landing. General Hardee then ordered Colonel Morgan to move to the extreme left and charge the first enemy he saw. At a section of tangled woods some skirmishers fired on the squadron and a charge was ordered. It was a poor place for cavalry action. The charge, according to Duke, carried into the woods where the main body of the skirmishers poured the fire on the cavalry. The horsemen rode through and broke clear beyond the Blue-coated soldiers.

(1) Henry, Ralph Selph, The Story of the Confederacy, 1943, p.120

(2) Duke, Basil W., History of Morgan's Cavalry, p.141



Darkness brought an end to the bitter fighting. The Confederates prepared for an almost certain victory on the morrow and the Federals worked feverishly to prepare defenses. As the sun went down, Buell's divisions were coming to the aid of Grant. The next morning found them so strong that nothing was left for the Confederates to do but retreat to Corinth.

During the rest of 1862, Morgan again set out upon separate raids to harrass the enemy. In July he engineered his first Kentucky raid in hopes of bringing much support to the South. He crossed into Kentucky at Tompkinsville; went from there to Glasgow, Lebanon, Springfield, Harrodsburg, Lawrenceburg, and finally turned back to escape capture at Cynthiana. In August Morgan captured a Federal cavalry unit of some 250 men at Hartsville, Tennessee in a very spirited and well planned fight.

The military necessity for a diverting raid is readily evident from the foregoing account. To summarize, it may be said:

"It was designed to create a diversion in Kentucky to assist in covering the retreat of Bragg's army, but Morgan on his own responsibility and against orders carried it across the Ohio." (1)

Duke, chief of staff to Morgan, indicates that Bragg ordered this raid to go any place in Kentucky and the troops then to hurriedly return for the inevitable showdown engagement, but that Morgan insisted upon the right

(1) Henry, p.296

to cross into the North. He felt that a raid into Kentucky would soon be forced back and result only in temporary respite for the retreating Confederate armies of Middle Tennessee. On the other hand, he was certain that a drive into the enemy country would bring large bodies of troops after him and weaken the force against Bragg. Chickamauga proved him right. Bragg definitely refused to authorize the Ohio crossing. Duke says:

"General Bragg refused him permission to make the raid as he desired to make it and ordered him to confine himself to Kentucky. I was not present at the interview between them, but General Morgan told me that he intended, notwithstanding his orders, to cross the Ohio." (1)

Bragg disclaimed all responsibility for Morgan's trip into Ohio, and no orders can be found that state otherwise. Wheeler, Morgan's immediate superior, states:

"...he (Morgan) was urged by me to observe the importance of his returning to our Army as rapidly as possible. I make this point apparent, as it is the one to which my attention was particularly called." (2)

(1) Duke, p.410

(2) Official Records, Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion, Series I, Volume XXIII

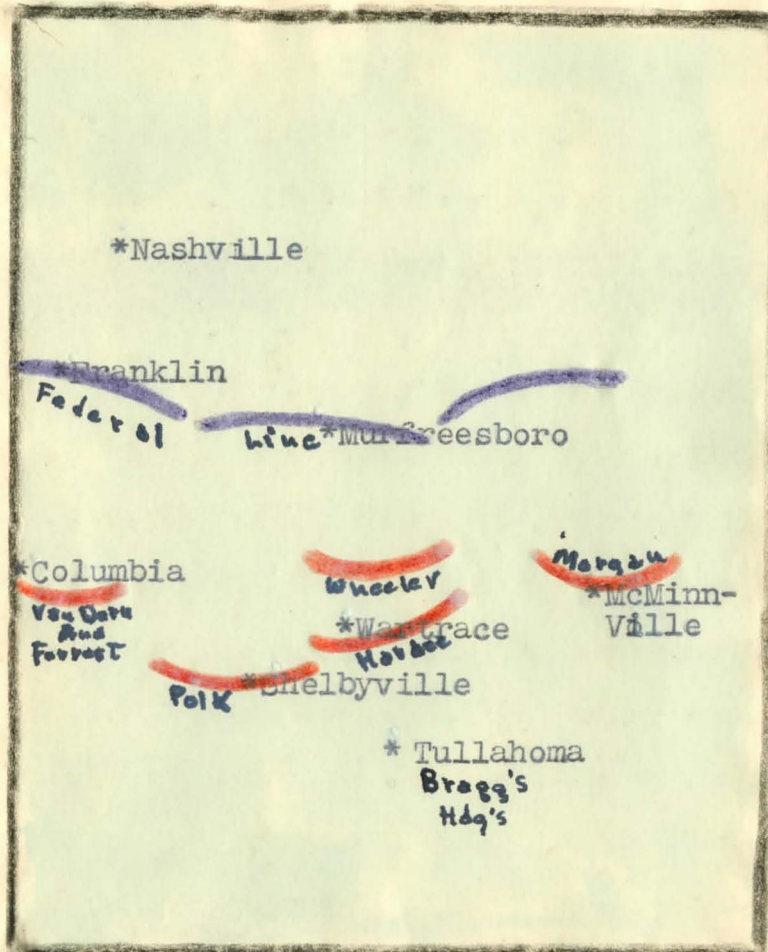
## CHAPTER II

### REASONS FOR RAIDING

In May, 1863 no movements of consequence were made in the Central theatre of operations. In the east, Chancellorsville was fought and lost by the Union. In the Mississippi Valley, Grant began his seige of Vicksburg. June brought activity all along the line with Rosecrans moving his Federal troops against Bragg in Middle Tennessee. Since this campaign was the background for Morgan's raid to the North, it will be treated in more detail here.

On June 23rd Rosecrans' line ran from Franklin, in the west, through Murfreesboro and to the headwaters of Stones River, in middle Tennessee. Bragg's line extended from Columbia in the west to Wartrace in the east. At Columbia was the cavalry of Van Dorn and Forrest; at Shelbyville was Leonidas Polk; at Wartrace was Hardee with Wheeler's cavalry north; and John Hunt Morgan was still farther north at McMinnville.

On the 23rd Bragg was flanked out of his position and the Union Army moved to within twelve miles of Tullahoma. Positions were taken here and battle awaited. Again Rosecrans feints and draws the Confederates off position. Clearly outflanked, Bragg saw that he must retreat to Chattanooga and called upon Morgan to create a diversion in Rosecrans' rear in Kentucky.



Scale -One inch equals About  
22 miles

Showing Union and Confederate  
positions in Tennessee, 1863,  
June.

On December 14, 1862, a week after the Hartsville fight, Morgan married Martha Ready of Murfreesboro, his wife having died some time before. At the time he was thirty-seven years old and had just been commissioned a Brigadier General on December 11th, "General Hardee urged that the commission should be made out as Major-General, but Mr. Davis said, 'I do not wish to give my boys all of their sugar plums at once.'" (1)

By December 20th Morgan was again on the way to Kentucky, leaving his superior, General Bragg, facing Rosecrans in Middle Tennessee while he operated in the rear of the Federal armies. He went through Glasgow and Elizabethtown and then swung east to Bardstown, then south through Columbia and back to Tennessee. In the meantime, after an indecisive battle at Stone River where more than 23,000 men of both armies were killed or wounded, Bragg fell back and established headquarters at Tullahoma. During this retreat, Martha wrote to her new husband:

"I had some dark days, dearest, and when the battle was raging around me in such fury, and everybody from the Commander-in-Chief to the privates were praying for "Morgan to come"....there was one continual inquiry at the front door - 'When will Morgan be here?'" (2)

Bragg would like to have had the answer to that question, for he had sent orders to Morgan which were never received. Evidently the couriers did not reach

(1) Duke, p.317

(2) Letter quoted by Holland and dated Winchester, Kentucky, January 6, 1863

Morgan in Kentucky.

It is also evident that Morgan hoped to be of assistance to Lee advancing into Pennsylvania. Although this may appear a far-fetched dream, still there is indication that this was what Morgan had hoped to do.

"He had ordered me three weeks previously to send intelligent men to examine the fords of the upper Ohio-that at Buffington among them-and it is a fact of which others, as well as myself are cognizant, that he intended-long before he crossed the Ohio-to make no effort to recross it, except at some of these fords, unless he found it more expedient, when he reached that region, to join General Lee, if the latter should still be in Pennsylvania." (1)

Still another motive for the raid is best introduced by a note appended to the diary of J. B. Jones who was a clerk in the Confederate War Department at Richmond. The entry for July 18th, 1863 states: "General Morgan is in the enemies country". The note says, "The fatal Ohio raid, launched probably at Vallandigham's request to rally the Copperheads in Indiana, Ohio and join Lee in Pennsylvania". (2)

Obviously Richmond did not know Morgan's motives, but support is found for this statement in the writings of John W. Headley, a Lieutenant in Morgan's cavalry who was detached from this duty to the Secret Service in the United States and Canada and who later made the attempt to burn New York.

(1) Duke, p.411

(2) Jones, J. B., A Rebel War Clerk's Diary, p.382

"Mr. Vallandigham returned to Ohio about the middle of June (1863). He made speeches immediately...In his first speech he almost declared the existence and purposes of the order (Sons of Liberty). He said: 'But I warn also those men in power that there is a vast multitude, a host whom they cannot number, bound together by the holiest ties, to defend..their natural and constitutional rights as free men at all hazards and to the last extremity.'" (1)

Significant is the statement, "The 20th of July seemed to have been determined upon as the date of outspoken declaration of resistance". (2) Since Headley was in the Confederate Secret Service and in close contact with the whole movement, his story can be highly credited.

There were also other indications of this movement in the North. On June 11 "the deputy provost marshal for Rush County, Indiana was assassinated and his assistant wounded by two men concealed in a wheat field, and another enrollment officer was murdered in Sullivan County on June 18th. In this latter instance the crime was attributed by an organized group - presumably members of the K. G. C. who had been for sometime holding military drill...In reporting on the affair the provost marshal for the area estimated that in this and the adjoining congressional district in Illinois there were at least twelve hundred men secretly under arms". (3)

The K. G. C. referred to was the Knights of the

- (1) Headley, John W., Confederate Operations in Canada and New York, p.223
- (2) Headley, p.232
- (3) Gray, Wood, The Hidden Civil War, p.137



Golden Circle which had been organized in opposition to the declaration of war against the south. It was a secret organization with many members and flourished along the border in the Civil War period.

This is also verified in the official communications of the time. In June of 1862 Governor Morton of Indiana had written to Stanton, the Secretary of War, and told of the "existence of a secret political organization in Indiana of an estimated strength of 10,000 members whose ascertainable purposes included the obstruction of recruiting, opposition to the collecting of taxes for war purposes and, in general, the fostering of distrust of the constituted authorities". (1)

There is evidence of official fear of collaboration between the Knights of the Golden Circle and Morgan:

"Office Acting Assistant Provost Marshal  
Indianapolis, July 10, 1863

Sir: In consequence of Morgan's Raid into this State and the fears I entertain that there is an understanding between him and the Knights of the Golden Circle, I have instructed the several provost Marshals that in the event of the militia being called away...the roll is to be so secreted as to put it out of the power of the domestic enemies to find them. The militia of the State are being called out and...domestic traitors may embrace this opportunity to destroy the rolls.

Colonel and Actg. Asst. Prov. Marshal  
General for Indiana" (2)

(1) Gray, p.92

(2) O.R.A., Series III, Volumn III, p.481

It is evident, too, that Morgan had a good idea of this attitude in the North. Captain Thomas Hines had been on a reconnoitering expedition for Morgan some few weeks before the raid, and Morgan had sent spies into the North to chart a path for the raid if opportunity developed.

In his diary for February, 1864 Jones states that:

"A letter from Lieut. Col. R. A. Alston, Decatur, Ga. says Capt. \_\_\_\_\_, one of General Morgan's secret agents has just arrived there after spending several months in the North, and reports that Lincoln cannot recruit his armies by draft, or any other mode, unless they achieve some signal success in the spring campaign. He says, moreover, that there is a perfect organization, all over the North, for the purpose of revolution and the expulsion or death of the Abolitionists and free negroes; and of this organization Generals \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are the military leaders. Col. A. asked permission of the Secretary of War to go into Southern Illinois, where, he is confident, if he contribute to precipitate civil war, he can, at least, bring out thousands of men who will fight for the Southern cause." (1)

It seems clear that the Raid into Ohio was based upon a real hope of fomenting revolt and adding great numbers to the Confederate banner. Morgan must have listened to the reports of well-meaning but over-enthusiastic spies. It was to gain recruits for the cause that he continually ventured into Kentucky in the early period of the war and it is not too far amiss to assume that the raid became a Raid to the North, and not simply a diversion in Kentucky, for this same reason.

It is clear that here was an opportunity to take the Union at low ebb. Who could say but what a well timed raid into the North would bring great support? There was reason to expect it. "The fate of the Union at the end of June, 1863 seemed to hang upon the military fortunes of the next few days." (1) It was July 8th when John Morgan crossed into Indiana----perhaps his raid was not so greatly without aim as it appeared.

(1) Gray, p.

CHAPTER III

THROUGH KENTUCKY

"But when the Federal Infantry was advancing General Morgan executed a movement for the diversion of the enemy which in its conception and details constituted the most remarkable cavalry exploit of the war." (1)

On July 2nd, 1863 the troops under Morgan started toward the State of Kentucky in high spirits. They numbered 2,460 effective cavalrymen (2), divided into two brigades, each a small artillery unit. In the First Brigade, commanded by Colonel Basil W. Duke, there were 1,460 men and two 3 inch Parrot guns as artillery. The second Brigade, commanded by Colonel Adam Johnson, contained 1,000 men and had two 12 pound howitzers.

General Judah, Federal commander along the Kentucky-Tennessee border, counted on the high water to keep any raiders from his position. Thus, Morgan's men swam across the Cumberland with only a light skirmish. It must have been ludicrous to see the Confederates form line of battle clad only in cartridge belt and Enfield rifle! At Columbia, Woolford's cavalry disputed the entrance and Captain J. C. Cassel of the advance guard was wounded. He was placed in an ambulance and went through the entire raid thus, even escaping capture.

(1) Johnson, J. Stoddard, p.172

(2) Young says 2,600 men; Boling says 4,000

On the fourth of July the Raiders were at Green River stockade where Colonel Moore and the 25th Michigan held them up. The stockade was perfectly situated and rendered a direct assault necessary to carry it. Morgan was thus disposed to parley and therefore called upon Moore to surrender. He refused with, "the Fourth of July was no day for me to entertain such a proposition". (1)

Colonel Johnson assaulted the works with two regiments which were stopped and hurled back; the Eleventh Kentucky rushed to the rescue, were slowed, stopped and pushed back. Thirty-six men were killed and forty-five wounded, among them some of the outstanding officers. The Confederates withdrew and left the defenders unmolested.

The raid continued through Campbellsville without incident and neared the outskirts of Lebanon. Here a civilian had been taken prisoner and while in custody, his watch had been stolen by Captain Murphy. Murphy was reported by Captain Magenis and arrested. While under arrest he approached Magenis and shot him to death.

On the morning of the fifth the Gray troops attacked Lebanon, which town was garrisoned by Colonel Hanson and the Twentieth Kentucky with two Michigan Regiments a mile or so up the road. The Blue regiment took shelter in houses and the large railroad depot. The fight lasted about three hours when finally a charge by the 2nd Kentucky charged the building and Hanson surrendered.

(1) Young, p.372

The command immediately moved off toward Springfield where Company H of the 2nd Kentucky was detached to Harrodsburg to draw Burnside's Cavalry. Another Company of the Sixth deserted.

Bardstown was reached on the morning of July 6th and Salt River on the morning of the 7th. From here, Morgan sent Company D of the 2nd Kentucky and Company A of Cluke's Regiment, under command of Captain Davis, to seize boats at Twelve Mile Island and occupy Militia there and then rejoin Morgan at Salem, Indiana. Captain Taylor and Captain Merriweather of the 10th Kentucky moved on to capture boats at Brandenburg. (1)

The main command camped at Garnettsville on the seventh and the next morning entered Brandenburg. Here they were joined by Captain Thomas Hines; he had been sent to Clinton county as commandant of a rest camp for the Ninth Kentucky. Hines had gained permission to raid "north of the Cumberland" and stretched this into Indiana. With about forty men he spent two or three weeks raiding, and went as far north as Seymour where he was met by militia and forced to retreat, arriving at Brandenburg the same day as the rest of the division.

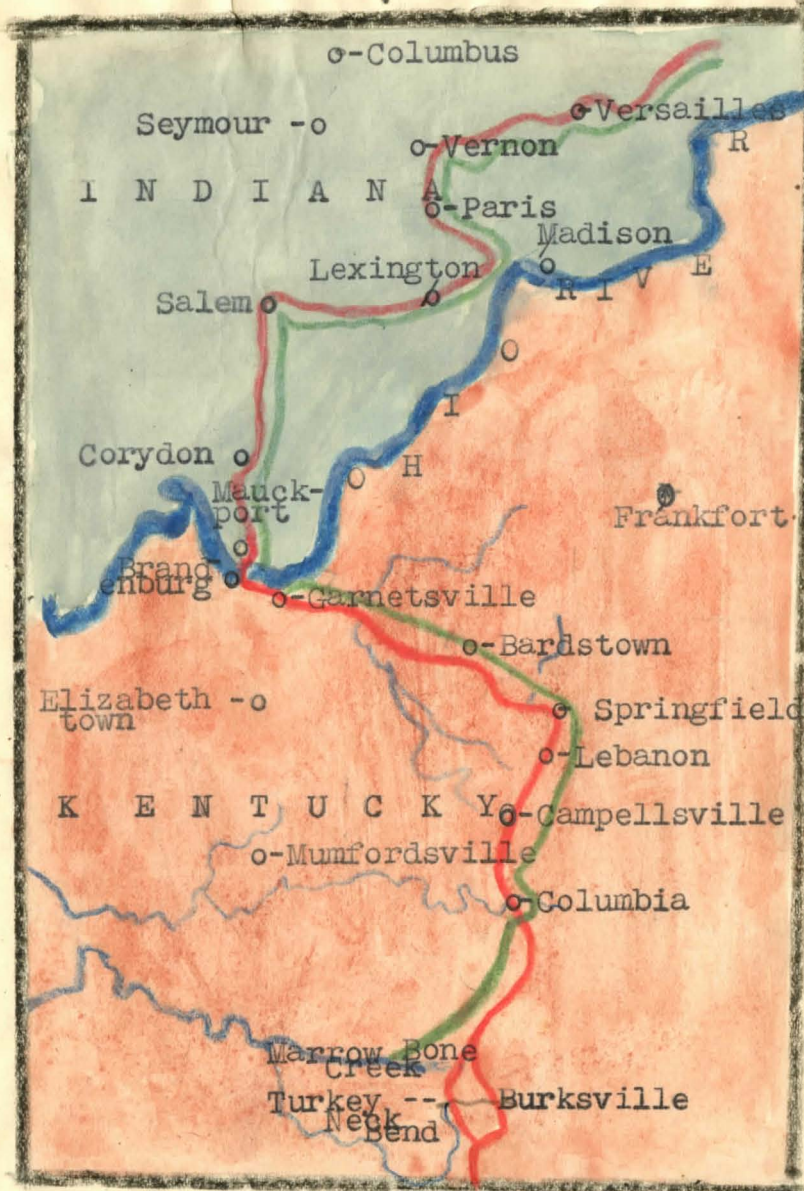
Taylor and Merriweather had captured the steamers Alice Dean and John McCombs. These Morgan determined to use in crossing the Ohio.

- (1) W. W. Boling states that Morgan went from Lebanon to Elizabethtown and was there fired upon by sharpshooters. "Morgan captured about fifteen of them and marched them a few miles west of town and had them shot." No other authority has Morgan passing through Elizabethtown.

In the meantime, the Federal pursuit of Morgan was in full swing. General Shakelford was at Russellville and Hobson at Columbia when Morgan moved into Kentucky at Burkesville. They moved to Marrowbone, thence to Columbia and Springfield; on to Bardstown and Brandenburg.

It is worthy of note here that these same ones who began the pursuit of the Raider were the ones who eventually ran him down. Their first impression had been that Morgan would drive westward and then circle back to the south. They arrived at Bardstown feeling certain he would soon begin his southern movement. It was a great surprise when he cut for the river and began to cross. The Blue forces attempted to close up on him while he endeavored to get across, but arrived too late.





— Route of Morgan

— Route of Federal's

Scale -About 30 miles  
to the inch

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LONG RIDE

On the morning of July the 8th, 1863, between 9:00 and 10:00 o'clock, Morgan arrived at Brandenburg, Kentucky on the banks of the Ohio River. The following description of the arrival of the Confederates is the only one available:

"A group of officers went into E. C. Ashcraft's hotel and rolled three barrels of whiskey out upon the sidewalk. One of the sons of Dixie with an axe burst in the heads of the casks and invited his comrades to have a drink. Soldiers in passing would stop long enough to fill their canteens and pass on. A lady, Miss Carrie Doyle, was teaching music in a building which stood across the street from the present site of E. A. Coleman's blacksmith shop. One of Morgan's men climbed on the piano and walked back and forth upon the keys." (1)

The relaxation was short, however, for across the river the Indiana militia, augmented by some regulars, was beginning to assemble. General Morgan and his staff rode to the home of Robert Buckner on the west hill of Brandenburg and there made their headquarters. Two of their artillery pieces were set up here in a pasture and two Parrott guns were pulled to the east hill and mounted in the yard of what was then the court-house.

On the Indiana side, Colonel John Timberlake had assembled about 300 Union men. He shouted across the river, "Shut down the steam on the McCombs and send over the steamer Alice Dean or I will blow you to hades in

(1) Boling, W. W., In the Meade County Messenger, August, 1946, telling of reminiscences of Morgan's Raid.

five minutes." (1)

Almost immediately a bombardment began from the Indiana shore. One shell fell among a group of the cavalrymen and scattered them, wounding the quartermaster of the First Brigade. The batteries of Morgan returned the fire and forced the one gun of the Federals to silence. The small detachment of Indiana men fell back to the steep hills about a mile from the river. In the retreat, two of the men sat down to rest for a moment on the end of a log. A Confederate shell struck the other end of the log and both of them, James Kern and Jerry Nance, were killed.

As the small Federal force retreated, the Southerners began to cross. The Second Kentucky and the Ninth Tennessee left their horses and boarded the steamers which placed them in Indiana. Here they skirmished for a moment and then began their advance toward the bluffs.

At this juncture, a small river gunboat appeared and opened fire on the troops still in Brandenburg. Basil Duke describes it thus:

"Suddenly checking her way, she tossed her snub nose defiantly like an angry beauty of the coal pits, sidled a little toward the town, and commenced to scold. A bluish-white funnel-shaped cloud spouted out from her left hand bow and a shot flew at the town, and then changing front forward she snapped a shell at the men on the other side." (2)

- (1) Boling, In the Meade County Messenger, August, 1946
- (2) Duke, p.433

The parrot guns immediately opened up on the gunboat and a duel ensued. "Morgan watched the engagement with a show of emotion he rarely exhibited; in his dangerous position he was separated by nearly a thousand feet of water from two of his best regiments. Behind him the pursuit was fast closing up." (1) It was a very tense moment for the leader of the cavalry force and one of the most trying of the entire raid. The river was the nemesis which finally brought about his undoing a few days later at Buffington.

The Union side gives this picture:

"U.S.S. Springfield (1)  
Off New Albany, July 9, 1863

Sir: I engaged John H. Morgan this morning at 9 o'clock at Brandenburg. I have been fighting nearly all day. He is crossing over to Indiana. He has 10,000 men and several pieces of heavy artillery. He has his batteries planted at three places commanding the river. We will have to have boats below town to operate with me. He wants to hold that place until he recrosses.

Joseph Watson  
Acting Ensign, Commanding

Lieutenant-Commander LeRoy Fitch  
No. 5, East Front." (2)

(1) Holland, p.233

(2) The Gunboat U.S.S. Springfield is listed by the Navy

Department as follows:

Cost - \$13,000.00

Speed - Upstream, 5 miles

Class - Stern-wheel steamer

Length - 134'9"

Tonnage - 146

Beam - 26'11"

Engines - 2

Depth - 4'4"

Boilers - 2

Name changed from W.A.Healy

Battery - January 8, 1863 - 6, 24 pdr. howitzers

(O. R. N., Series II, Volumn I, p.213)

(3) Ibid, Series III, Volumn III, p.246

For an hour and a half the ferrying ceased and Morgan watched as one gunboat stood between him and the completion of his great hope to raid the North.

Having exhausted her ammunition, the Springfield withdrew up the river until two transports of infantry, numbering about 500, arrived from Louisville. Again the enemy was engaged and finally the gunboat withdrew completely. A citizen of Brandenburg described the havoc in the city as a result of the bombardment:

"A shell from the gunboats went through Judge Percifuls kitchen, struck the stable at the old jail and buried itself in the hill...Another shell struck the Hotel Meade and went down through the building to the lower floor...another shell struck on the levee wounding one of the Confederates and killing two horses...Another killed three horses and still another shattered a tree in front of a building on the main street." (1)

It was dark before the first Brigade had crossed and after midnight when the artillery was finally ferried over. The Alice Dean was then burned, since she was in government service, and the McCombs freed. That night they penetrated six miles into Indiana and camped at Frakes Mill. The people had left their homes at a moment's notice and the suppers in many places were still upon the table as the Confederates came on. "The chickens were strolling before the door with a confidence that was touching but misplaced."

(1) Boling, In the Meade County Messenger

On July 9th Morgan started for Corydon and the Union forces were in an uproar:

"Cairo, Illinois  
July 9, 1863

We have six gunboats on the Ohio, and will send others, if possible. At what point did Morgan cross, and where is it probable he will attempt to recross?

A. M. Pennock,  
Fleet Captain and Commandant  
of the Station

Governor Morton  
Indianapolis, Indiana" (1)

"Columbus  
July 8, 1863

...Please let me know what naval force you have ordered to meet Morgan...

Asboth - Brigadier General" (2)

The Second Brigade took the advance up the narrow, dusty road that led to Corydon, some fifteen miles from the river. The advance guard came upon a group of militia posted just outside town. They were behind breastworks made of logs and defended them with resolution. The rail piles were charged with some real losses to the Confederates, with eight killed and thirty-three wounded. Among the wounded was Morgan's adjutant, Lieutenant Thorpe, Company A, 2nd Kentucky.

The Southern troops then outflanked the defenders and forced a retreat toward the town. In the town, Morgan

- (1) O.R.N., Report of July 9, 1863
- (2) O.R.N., p.483

stopped at the Corydon Hotel and here the daughter of the innkeeper informed him of Lee's defeat at Gettysburg. Morgan was dismayed...the object of his great raid had disappeared, but there was no turning back now. The advance continued, and that night the cavalry camped on the road 18 miles from Salem, Indiana.

Meanwhile, back at Brandenburg, the pursuit was gathering.

"U. S. S. Moose  
Off Brandenburg, Kentucky  
July 9th, 1863

....I arrived here between 5 and 6 p.m. and much to my disappointment and sorrow, found the enemy had effected a crossing by means of the two steamers captured.... On my arrival here I found General Hobson's forces coming into the town, following General Morgan. I hope with the aid of the merchant steamers, he will have his entire force across the river before midnight and after Morgan.....

LeRoy Fitch  
Lieutenant Commander" (1)

General Hobson was thus close upon the heels of the Gray Cavalry. Riding onto Brandenburg, the Federal Cavalry set up headquarters in the Methodist Church and rested for a time.

With Morgan almost half-way through the state of Indiana, the defense seemed to falter on some minor difficulties.

(1) O.R.N., p.483



"Indianapolis, July 10, 1863

Secretary of War:  
Quartermaster here has telegraphed  
Quartermaster-General for authority to  
turn over to the State of Indiana uni-  
forms for Indiana Legion, called out  
to repel invasion and can get no ans-  
wer. Please order the issue at once.  
Troops are being rapidly organized, and  
many are now ready to move. Answer

O. P. Morton  
Governor of Indiana" (1)

From Ohio, whence Morgan was aimed, came this:

"Columbus, Ohio, July 11, 1863

Hon. E. M. Stanton:  
Please authorize me to issue arms to the  
volunteer militia of Ohio for border  
defense. You have about 15,000 stands  
of arms in our arsenal unfit for service  
in the field.

David Tod  
Governor" (2)

Numerous dispatches of like nature flew between the  
governors and the War Department. Meanwhile, Morgan,  
unhampered by red tape, with no base to defend, living  
on the country he passed through and with no definite  
point toward which he must journey, was playing havoc  
with peace and order in the sovereign states of Indiana  
and Ohio. In one field, Morgan was making hay---that of  
prisoners. In a letter from the Secretary of War to the  
President there is a complaint that "a considerable num-  
ber represented as prisoners were not soldiers, but were  
non-combatants - citizens of towns and villages, farmers,

(1) Official Records, Series III, Volumn III, p.481  
(2) Ibid, p.483

travelers and others in civil life not captured in battle but taken in their homes, on their farms, or on the highways by John Morgan and other Rebel raiders, who put them under a sham parole. To balance these men against Rebel Soldiers taken on the field would be relieving the enemy from the pressure of war and enable him to protract the contest to indefinitely." (1)

On the morning of the 10th the Confederate troops began a march toward Salem. Major Weber took the advance with Lieutenant Welsh of Company K in the extreme advance with twelve men. Just outside Salem about 150 men had gathered to resist the advance. Lieutenant Welsh charged them and they scattered toward the town. The pursuit continued into the town where it was discovered that 200 or 300 men were arming. A few random shots, and the Confederates entered the town.

Although Major Steele had been appointed Provost Marshal, he was unable, even with the officers, to do much about the looting which started. Calico seemed to be the article sought more than any other, but some things taken were ludicrous. "One man carried a bird cage with three canaries in it for two days. Another rode with a chafing dish, which looked like a small metallic coffin, on the pommel of his saddle until an officer forced him to throw it away. Although the weather was intensely warm, another slung seven pairs of skates around

(1) Official Records, Series III, Volume III, p.1130

his neck and chucked over his acquisition. I saw very few articles of real value taken - they pillaged like boys robbing an orchard. I would not have believed that such a passion could have been developed so ludicrously among any body of civilized men." (1) At Piketown, Ohio one trooper forced his way past a guard and filled his pockets with horn buttons!

The troops left Salem at about 2 P.M. and advanced rapidly toward Vienna, where they arrived at nightfall. Morgan had decided to advance roughly parallel with the river. Had he turned north, he might well have captured Indianapolis and freed 3,000 Confederate prisoners before General Lew Wallace, who had been summoned from vacation, could form a defense.

At Vienna, Ellsworth tapped the telegraph lines and learned that they were comparatively safe for the time being. They proceeded to Lexington, some five to seven miles, and rested for the night. That night Federal cavalry rode into the town clear up to the house where Morgan slept, but suddenly retired.

Early the next morning Morgan sent Colonel Smith to make a feint at Madison, Indiana. It was a skillful feint and good generalship, for the Union leaders felt that Morgan would attempt to recross at Madison.

(1) Duke, p.437

"July 11, 1863-12:45 P.M.

Dispatch received. Morgan is now supposed to be not far from Vernon. He may attempt to cross above Madison, or he may turn and try to cross below Louisville. I will try to communicate to you all the information I get of his movements by telegraph.

A. E. Burnside,  
Major-General

LeRoy Fitch  
Gun Boat Moose, New Albany" (1)

Morgan probably never learned that large forces were trying to contact him on that day, but could not reach him. LeRoy Fitch, who hung doggedly to his heels through the raid says, "the whole river appears to be infested with guerrillas all at once. I am now in great hopes of being able to meet Morgan". Whether or not these men would have made any great contribution to the tiring cavalry is hard to say, but evidently they were well prepared to carry the war to the North. Their end was disastrous:

"Madison, Indiana  
July 12, 1863

Sir: In my letter of yesterday I mentioned the Springfield and Victory having cut off reinforcements attempting to cross the river to join Morgan. This force, as I learned today, amounted to 1,500; 45, as I mentioned before, succeeded in getting over; some few it is reported were drowned, and 39 were held on the island and taken prisoners by the infantry forces coming

up on transports after the gunboats;  
50 horses were also captured.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant  
LeRoy Fitch  
Lieutenant Commander

Acting Rear Admiral David D. Porter  
Commanding Mississippi Squadron" (1)

The Island spoken of was 12 Mile Island above Louisville. The Gray Division moved through Paris and on toward Vernon, which was in sight by afternoon. Here Smith rejoined them, unaware that at Madison he had been within gunshot of 1500 men and horses trying to join him.

The Cavalry commander sent a demand for the surrender of Vernon, but was answered by General Love, who requested that he be allowed to move non-combatants. Love reported;

"Vernon, 12th

Arrived here last night in time to answer Morgan's second demand for surrender. Sent him word our force was sufficient to hold the town. He said thirty minutes would open his artillery. Got the women and childred out as fast as possible and made the best disposition possible with our force and limited time. Expected attack every minute until 2 o'clock when information I believe to be reliable leads me to believe he declines a fight, and is hastening towards Madison. If so he will reach the Ohio at Madison, or vicinity, about early dawn. I don't think he can escape. Information looks as if his command was wearied out and he anxious about his escape.

Love, General" (2)

- (1) O.R.N., p.249
- (2) O.R.N., p.418

Instead, Morgan simply burned a bridge or two and moved on toward DuPont. Here a meat-packing plant engaged the attention of the raiders and nearly all had a ham at their saddle. But more than hams were being caught by the Morgan men, for by this time they were averaging 21 hours in the saddle and the pursuit of General Hobson was so intense that the raiders had often to change horses. The Federals, close on their heels, took whatever horses were abandoned. This and haphazard requisitioning caused much confusion in settling war claims. " The Commissioners appointed to settle the Morgan Raid damages were swamped with thousands of claims, some so insignificant as requests for one bowie knife valued at a dollar and a quarter or two sacks of apples valued at two dollars." (1) The Ohio claims commission paid about \$500,000 dollars for damages by the Confederates and \$200,000 for damages by the Federals pursuing them!

It may be well to mention here that there were two decided opinions of Morgan among the Unionists. One side felt he was "urging his men to every conceivable excess" while the other, represented by Colonel J. E. McGowen of the troop pursuing Morgan, felt that "Morgan was as considerate of the rights of the people of Ohio and Indiana as any raiders were on either side under like circumstances...

(1) Holland, p.268

We have yet to hear of any cruelty being practised pursuant to Morgan's order." (1)

As the General pressed on toward a town named Summansville located on the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, Colonel Grigsby was detached with his regiment and ordered to burn the bridges near Versailles, Indiana. At this place, Grigsby captured several horses but there was no fight of any moment. At Summansville the troops rested almost within sight of 2,500 militia loaded in box cars, who entrained for Cincinnati without knowing Morgan was there. Duke states that they often saw as high as 10,000 militia a day.

At 5 A. M. the march was resumed, and at 10 o'clock on the 13th they reached Harrison across the Ohio-Indiana border. As Morgan entered Ohio, the pursuing forces again lost him for a time.

"U.S.S. Moose  
Aurora, Indiana  
July 13, 1863

Sir: Since my second letter of the 11th, I have been following up the river trying to keep on Morgan's right, as it is reported he is moving to the northward and eastward. At last accounts he was making to strike the river at this point, but he is now reported to be 15 miles back and making still to the north. It seems almost impossible to get any positive information as to his exact loyalty or movements....etc.

LeRoy Fitch  
Lieutenant Commander

Acting Rear Admiral David D. Porter,  
Commanding Mississippi Squadron" (2)

- (1) Holland, p.239
- (2) Navy Department, p.251

As Morgan pounded on, deep in enemy country, he realized the box into which he had placed himself... albeit not unwittingly. His strategy was to maneuver outside Cincinnati where he expected to be met by the forces of Burnside and Judah... He had formulated no particular plan for meeting them but hoped to elude them, since he realized that it would be a superhuman task to cut his way through them. He realized, also, that the cavalry hanging to his rear could not overtake him if he kept moving.

He also felt that the transportation of troops by river would be impeded by the falling of the river. He believed that there would be a general effort to catch him as he crossed the road leading from Hamilton to Dayton. He therefore set about deceiving them as to when and where he would cross this road. His small decoy parties rode out in all directions from Harrison in order to add confusion, but pointed in the general direction of Hamilton.

It is evident that some of Morgan's men, lagging or perhaps wounded, tried to cross from Indiana to Kentucky at the time Morgan was planning his way past Cincinnati. A despatch, dated the 13th of July, 1863, states that the gunboats, Springfield and Victory, "fell in with a portion of Morgan's men trying to cross at Twelve Mile Island". They were driven back save a few that were already across. The rest fled with the "Cavalry from Jeffersonville in hot pursuit". (1)

(1) Sources here are the Official Records of Navy Department



After two or three hours at Harrison, Morgan felt that he was ready to move. He was sure that his maneuvers had drawn the bulk of Union forces up the road and that those left in Cincinnati would draw into the city on the defensive rather than attempt to stop him. Morgan is often criticized for not taking this city, but it must be remembered that he had not the vaguest idea of its defense, had ridden fifty miles that day before reaching it, arrived at nightfall, and he had less than 2,000 of his men left. Morgan had determined to cross Ohio, and to return to Kentucky from Cincinnati would have been to fail to complete this desire. This would also free pursuing troops to return to other fields, as well as to harass Bragg in his retreat.

Morgan called for two men who knew the town, and two of Zachary Taylor's nephews responded. These men, Captain Taylor and Lieutenant McLain (1), went into the city and returned with reports of great excitement. The city was under martial law and all the men were flocking to the defense. Morgan's great problem now was to get around this formidable obstacle.

The march continued with the General in the advance, Johnson's brigade first and Duke's bringing up the rear. The officers had to ride up and down the line shouting for the men to close ranks. Weary and saddle worn, they straggled along the road. Many fell from the horses and

(1) Holland, p.243

slept by the road until awakened by a Union bayonet prodding them. The regiment of Colonel Cluke was at the rear of Johnson's Brigade, and its rear companies began to lose ground, thus putting a gap between them and the advance. Along the line of march, the distance grew greater until all contact was lost. Thus the troops behind, Duke's brigade, were lost from the command. They had to resort to reading the sign posts and trying to see the hoof prints in the road in order to follow the rest of the Corps.

"Adam Johnson, weary as the rest, sat on his horse at an intersection checking off his regiments as they rode by. Colonel Cluke rode up to him, his clothes and beard flaked with dust and his eyes heavy from loss of sleep. 'I'd give a thousand dollars for an hour of sleep', Cluke muttered. Johnson held his horse while he slept for an hour in the saddle." (1)

Major Steele went into the extreme advance to drive in pickets and scouts. His select body of men did a thorough job. To pass through an unfamiliar town, filled with enemy troops, in the depths of their own territory, at night ... is no mean achievement and the job assigned to the Major was one of the most difficult.

Skirting the town, the command marched to the east. At one time they marched through the very suburbs of Cincinnati - that of Glendale - and crossed every one of the principal roads. After stopping for a few minutes to destroy some track of the Little Miami railroad, they

(1) Holland, p.243

moved on and rested in sight of Camp Dennison. Here there was a skirmish and some Government wagons burned just as the daylight broke.

Another day of grulling riding and by four P.M. the column was in Williamsburg, 28 miles from Cincinnati. It was an amazing ride "since leaving Summansville in Indiana, in a period of 35 hours, more than 90 miles - the greatest march that even Morgan had made". (1)

After a night of rest the whole command was in better spirits. The morning of the fifteenth Morgan said to Johnson, who was seeking orders, "All our troubles are now over. The river is only twenty-five miles away and tomorrow we will be on southern soil". (2)

The Federals thought differently:

"New Albany, July 14, 1863  
(received 15th)

Naumkeag over the shoals. Will want her here for patrol above Louisville for a few days. Do not think Morgan can escape. Have seven boats on patrol from Madison to Carrollton. Had five boats at Brandenburg 9th, but he had gone.

LeRoy Fitch  
Lieutenant Commander" (3)

In forty-eight hours the Ohio had risen one foot; the river was coming up rapidly. Morgan's line of march went through Georgetown about 12 miles from the river, (4)

(1) Young, p.386

(2) Duke, p.444

(3) O.R.N., p.251

(4) A report from U.S.S. Moose, July 16, verifies this.

but the high water and the gunboats turned the column toward Buffington fords, some 90 miles to the east. The Militia was now very active. They felled trees, burned bridges, snipped at the column and impeded progress every way possible. The situation grew more tense. The Union leaders sensed the goal of Morgan's dash from Georgetown.

"July 16, 1863

I trust you to check the enemy at Pomeroy and Buffington Island until our men get up. There is a force of our men and two pieces of artillery at Buffington...I am sure you will not allow them to cross if you can prevent it....

A. E. Burnside  
Major-General" (1)

The eyes of North and South alike were focused upon Morgan. The North was amazed at his daring march and elusive methods; the South pinned its waning hope upon the dashing Cavalryman. Vicksburg had fallen on July Fourth and, rapidly upon its heels, Gettysburg had ended disastrously for the Confederacy; Bragg was falling back in Tennessee; Morgan's was the only operation in an aggressive sense which the South was put forth. The Richmond Enquirer of July 16, 1863 states:

"This bold raid is the only actively aggressive operation in which our forces are engaged. It is the only real movement we are making toward a restoration of peace...

(1) O.R.N.

for peace must be conquered on the  
enemies ground, or it will not come  
at all."

The pressure increased and, as the Gray columns swept by Pomeroy on the 18th, we see that the Federals were carrying out Burnside's orders with a will. Duke states that "in passing near Pomeroy there was one continual fight". Morgan was growing weary and alarmed. Any hope of assistance from Copperhead sources had not materialized, the ride had been greulling, the men were reaching the limits of their endurance, and any suitable ford was still far away. The Chicago Tribune of 1863, July 18th, best describes his predicament: "John Morgan is still in Ohio, or rather is in Ohio without being allowed to be still".

Morgan certainly could not afford to be still. He tried to rest at Chester, Ohio at one o'clock in the afternoon, and the hour and a half spent there brought him to Buffington Island after dark. This was a tragic turn of events, for it made it necessary for the cavalry to assault an unknown work in the dark if they were to escape to the opposite shore. The exact position of the defenses were not known and even the terrain itself was unfamiliar to the men. Neither was there any means for knowing how many troops the Federals had guarding this ford, nor their displacement.

The steps to be taken were therefore to be planned under the greatest need for haste and yet with as great

amount of certainty as possible. This critical time on the northern bank of the Ohio must have at least called a fleeting remembrance to Morgan's mind of the time at Brandenburg a few days before when he had stood on the southern shore and looked hopefully to the North. Council was held and it was suggested that by leaving the wounded, artillery and wagons the crossing could be made at a deeper ford up river. Morgan decided to take all or lose all. Two regiments were then ordered to place themselves ready for assault upon the Federal works at dawn, and they soon put themselves into position. It was here that the entire success of the raid hung in the balance, and about 2 A.M. the scale tipped against the Southern cause. Scouts of the Gray forces, weary and jaded, failed to detect the abandonment of the Union works by the defenders. Had they known that the ford was undefended, they might have moved their entire force across before the enemy could stop them.

When dawn came and the discovery was made, Duke immediately moved a force up the Pomeroy road a few miles to pursue the retreating garrison. Here they stumbled upon General Judah's advance guard and learned that his cavalry was only a short distance away with about 8,000 men!

Here began one of the most magnificent cavalry battles in the annals of history. On the one side, the sons of

Michigan and Indiana, (1) on the other, the boys of Kentucky and Tennessee. The Fifth and Sixth Kentucky formed to meet the charge of the Union force, made up of the Seventh and Eighth Michigan and led by a detachment of the Fifth Indiana. The charge was turned, but only after a portion of the Fifth Kentucky was cut off and the Parrott guns captured. The Blue line wheeled and reformed for a new charge...Duke sent hurriedly to Morgan for the Second Kentucky...firing began to the rear upon the Chester road. Couriers informed Colonel Duke that Johnson, in the rear, had been attacked by the Union Cavalry under General Hobson! Unaware of each other being present, Judah and Hobson had caught the Confederates in a neat "Cul de Sac". Along the river the gunboats opened up on the gray contingents. About twelve artillery pieces were at work on Duke's regiments. Hobson was to the east, Judah to the west, and four or five gunboats to the south of the trapped cavalry. Johnson and Duke formed their lines at right angles with Johnson opposing Hobson and Duke aligned against Judah. Judah formed a line of infantry in his front and sent the Michigan cavalry to deploy as skirmishers on a ridge to the right. This put the entire Confederate force under a cross fire. To the rear, if such could be imagined in the confusion, General Morgan

(1) Speed claims it was the 3, 1, 8, 9, 11, 12 Kentucky and the 8, 9 Michigan which formed the Union Force, p.235

was attempting to draw off the Second and Ninth Tennessee and the Eighth and Eleventh Kentucky. Colonel Duke tells the scene best:

"The scene in the rear of the lines engaged was one of indescribable confusion. While the bulk of the regiments which General Morgan was drawing off, were moving from the field in perfect order, there were many stragglers from each who were circling about the valley in a delerium of fright, clinging instinctively in their terror to bolts of calico and holding on to led horses, but changing the direction in which they galloped with every shell which whizzed or burst near them. The long train of wagons and ambulances dashed wildly in the only direction which promised escape, and becoming locked and entangled with each other in their flight, many were upset and terrified horses broke loose from them and plunged wildly through the mass. Some of them in striving to make their way out of the valley at the northern end, ran afoul of the howitzers attached to the Second Brigade, and guns and wagons were rolling headlong into the steep ravine. Occasionally a solid shot or shell would strike one and bowl it over like a tumbled ten pin." (1)

Morgan escaped from the valley with about 1,000 men and retreated along the river. Meanwhile, Duke and Johnson began to fall back. For about two miles the force retreated up the valley but when it was seen that there were only two means of escaping from this box, the two ravines were immediately jammed with men. The gunboats raked the passes and the Seventh Michigan charged. Duke and 700 men and officers surrendered. Part of the

(1) Duke, p.453



Ninth Tennessee had escaped to Kentucky. Morgan had ridden up the Chester road with the remnants. About 20 miles above Buffington Island Morgan tried to cross the river again and 300 men under Johnson and Grigsby got across, but Morgan in mid-stream turned around when he saw the entire command could not make it. The indefatigable LeRoy Fitch tells the story as he saw it:

"U.S.S. Moose  
Above Buffington Island,  
Ohio River  
July 19, 1863

After chasing Morgan nearly 500 miles, I at last met him on the river at this point. I engaged and drove him back capturing two pieces of artillery. He abandoned rest to General Judah. His forces broke in confusion from the banks, and left his wagon train, many horses and small arms in my possession. General Judah is now in pursuit of the remnant of his forces....

LeRoy Fitch  
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy

Rear Admiral D. D. Porter  
Commanding Mississippi Squadron, Vicksburg" (1)

Morgan returned to his men on the Ohio side of the river and found he had become a General of about 800 men. Two Brigades were formed with Cluke and Weber in command. The march continued. They forded rivers and climbed high hills, constantly calling on what little strength was left. On the twenty-sixth the Second Kentucky's Company C made the last charge. The charge left Morgan

(1) O.R.N., p.254

250 men. He determined to surrender on terms, for he realized the battle of Gettysburg would result in swarms of prisoners which in turn would lessen the opportunity of parole. He therefore determined to surrender upon terms if at all possible. He approached a Captain Burbeck, whom he styles a commander of Ohio militia. He agreed to leave Burbeck's district unmolested if the Captain would lead him to the Pennsylvania border. As they rode, Morgan saw a dust cloud in the distance come abreast them and then pass. He knew that he was caught. He agreed to surrender to Burbeck on terms that the officers should keep their side arms, and horses and the men their horses. Almost immediately, General Shackelford, Hobson's second in command, rode up and refused the terms. Many of the Union officers wanted them recognized, but the Confederates were imprisoned.

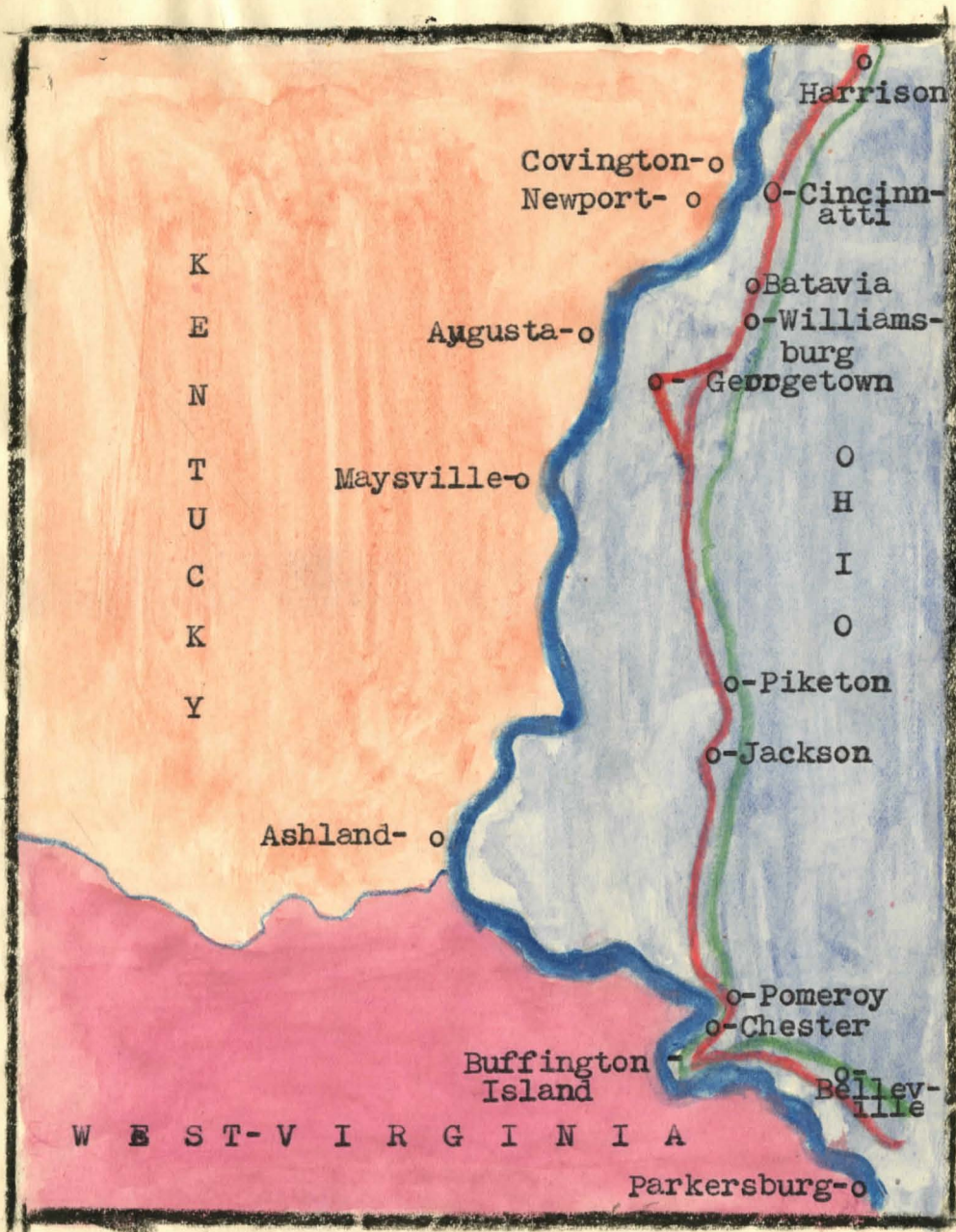
There has been some discussion of this refusal of terms to Morgan. He claimed that he surrendered to a Captain of the Ohio Militia on terms which were rejected, but the Union has another story. Shackelford states that he told Morgan, "That we had followed him thirty days and nights; that his demand could not be considered a moment; that I regarded his surrender to the militia Captain under such circumstances as not only absurd and ridiculous but unfair and illegal, and that I would not recognize it at all". (1)

(1) Speed, p.236

Morgan wrote to Governor Todd to insist upon the rights of the terms of surrender and he replied that, "Said Burbeck is not and never was a militia officer of the State...he was captured by you and traveled with you some considerable distance before your surrender". (1)

Burbeck himself has this to say: "I was Captain of no militia whatever, or any other force of men, but was appointed that Sunday morning as Captain by the men that went out with me on horseback, there being some fifteen or twenty in number". (2)

(1) O.R.A., Series I, Volumn XXIII, p.814  
(2) Ibid



— Morgan's Route

— Federal's Route

Scale -about 30 miles to  
the inch

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS OF THE RAID

The raid had closed not far from the Pennsylvania border, near New Lisbon, Ohio. North and South, there was great dispute as to whether it had accomplished anything. A Northern newspaper quoted by Duke says: "The object of the raid is yet a mystery time alone will develop the plan (1) if plan there was!"

It is true that General Bragg had been able to retreat without molestation from a flanking force; Rosecrans was deprived of men who would have been present at Chickamauga. In the Chattanooga Times of July 20th, 1863, the Union soldier, J.E. McGowan says, "Morgan's raid changed the whole aspect of military operations in Tennessee and Kentucky in the Summer and Fall of 1863; but for his delaying Burnside's movement upon Knoxville and the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad, that commander with 28,000 men would have joined Rosecrans three weeks before the Battle of Chickamauga was fought!"

The Federal attitude is shown in this; "Nothing is shown by any reports to have been

(1) Duke, p.

accomplished by the raid...What it was except a long ride ending in capture is not shown in any reports. No important place was touched and nothing was effected except the excitement incidental to such a passage through the country. Nor was it favorably commented on by the Confederate authorities" (1) This last statement is borne out by Alexander Stephens,"...if the cavalry incursion, by Gen. John Morgan,into Ohio,about the same time, had not taken place,which could have no effect so sure as that of arousing the war spirit of the North,then drooping and pining,that it would have been greatly better for us." (2)

The average citizen's opinion,in the Confederacy, after Gettysburg,Vicksburg,and Tullahoma must have been one of resignation to disasters. It is well revealed in these excerpts from a Confederate diary;

"Gen. Morgan like a comet has shot out of the bea en track of the army and after dashing deeply into Indiana the last heard of him he was in Ohio,near Cincinnati. He was playing havoc with the Steamboats,and capturing fine horses. He has some 3,000 men we cannot afford to lose - but I fear they will be lost!" (3)

A later insertion dated the 25th of July confirmed the writers judgement of five days before;

(1) Speed,p.233

(2) Stephens,Alexander,The War Between the States,1870  
Vol.II,P.567

(3)Jone's Diary,July 20th,1863.

The military opinion of the South is probably summed up by General Bragg speaking of a later raid by Morgan, but undoubtedly referring to the raid to the North. In a report the General says; "Should he ever return with his command it will as usual be disorganized or unfit for service until again armed, equipped, and disciplined. The large number of prisoners we always lose by these raiding expeditions has been the source of great evil!" (1)

Whether Morgan desired to surround his name with glory and make it immortal in military annals, or whether he struck out in a desire to carry the war to the North in any way, or whether it was the result of a well studied plan, we cannot say with any certainty. Perhaps it was a bit of all three, although the last is doubtful in the light of events, but John Morgan's determination, zeal, and bravery tend to cause us to give him the benefit of the doubt. The subsequent actions of his command, which will be described in a later chapter, reveal a spirit which indelibly impresses upon us that this raid was made, not for glory, but in the belief that it would aid the Confederacy by diverting large numbers of enemy troops. Morgan at least delayed the downfall of the Confederacy.

(1) Speed, p. 239



At various times and places during the raid there had been more than 100,000 men in pursuit of Morgan. The Army, Navy and even the Marine Corps had been detailed to bring him to bay. (1) He had ridden about 500 miles through the North and over a thousand miles behind enemy lines.

Swiggett says that if Forrest had had Morgan's men lost in the Ohio fiasco, and turned them loose on the twenty-first (at Chickamauga) there would have been a debacle. He forgets however, that had Morgan been present at the battle, so, in all likelihood would the 28,000 men of Burnside's drawn off by Morgan. In comparison to these numbers General Morgan's 2,500 men would have been small indeed.

This much is certain, the South never again effectively invaded Northern territory. Morgan had carried the war to the enemy and in so doing had buoyed the spirits of the Confederacy to a considerable degree. There is no doubt that Morgan became an outstanding hero and source of inspiration to the Confederacy;

"January 1, 1864... the President had a reception today and the City Councils have voted the hospitalities of the city to Brig. Gen. J. H. Morgan, whose arrival is expected. If he comes he will be the hero and have a larger crowd of admirers around him than the President!" (2)

(1) The Marines under Brigadier General Alfred W. Ellett were in pursuit of Morgan for a time.

(2) Jones, P., 122 Vol. II

It would be well, however, to give credit to both sides in this matter. If Morgan made a great ride then the Northern troops under Shackelford and Hobson certainly did also. They followed the Confederates all the way from Burkesville, Kentucky, across the State, into Indiana and on across the State of Ohio."...they at last outrode, turned upon the pursued, surrounded them and captured them. "It is claimed for Morgan that at one point he made ninety miles in thirty-five hours. If this is true what must have been the riding capacity of the pursuers who succeeded in overtaking a force moving so rapidly?" A joint consideration of the whole incident makes it clear that the pursuit was more remarkable than the raid." (1)

(1) Speed, p. 237, 238.



Showing Morgan's route through  
Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio.  
Scale-About 100 miles to the inch

## CHAPTER VI

### THE END OF THE TRAIL

Morgan and many of his men were confined in the State penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio. Much has been written and much more said about this incarceration. It is bitterly denounced by the Confederates as being a negation of the principles applying to the treatment of prisoners. The beards and hair of the men were shorn off close and this seems to have been the worst thing that happened to them. It is true that they were rigidly inspected from time to time, but even Duke gives no indication that they were mistreated. Many irritating incidents occurred in the prison, it is true, but for the most part the men of Morgan's command agree that it was not over stern. As a matter of fact a recital of it would appear as a wonderful excursion to some of today's prisoners of war. Duke states that food was sufficient and books and writing material were allowed. My Grandfather, who was a prisoner of the Confederates at Andersonville and Libby, could not say as much for them.

The men grew restless following the news of the battle of Chickamauga and determined to escape by any means found. Captain Hines found out that there was an air tunnel underneath the lower tier of cells and was prepared to dig out.

In order to carry out the operation, it was necessary that the men dig through the floor of the cell to the air passage and then work from there. Knives from the tables were used as tools and the hole in the cell floor covered by a carelessly tossed carpet bag. The men then set to work and a tunnel toward the main wall and designed to come up just inside it. A rope was then to be thrown over the wall and the escape thus effected.

On the night of November 26th, 1863, Morgan along with Hines and five others made good their escape. Morgan and Hines finally made their way to Athens, Tennessee. Morgan immediately set out for Richmond amid the ovations of the citizenry along the way. His reception from the Richmond officials was rather lukewarm. Only a portion of his old command could be restored to him. He finally took the field with two brigades about 2,000 strong to command the Department of Southwestern Virginia.

In July Basil Duke and several others were exchanged and soon rejoined Morgan. Here also should be mentioned the remnant that had escaped at Buffington with Colonel Adam R. Johnson. They had marched through the mountains of West Virginia and finally to the vicinity of Knoxville. Here those left reformed under Johnson and were present at the Battle of Chickamauga.

NOTE -The story of the escape is drawn from Duke.

In July, 1864, Morgan was again in Kentucky and on the 8th the command reached the vicinity of Mount Sterling where Morgan left Giltner and Martin while he moved on to Lexington. About three o'clock the following morning the Blue Cavalry dashed into the forces of Martin while they were still asleep. Headley, who was with Martin as a Lieutenant says, "The enemy were coming into camp now, shooting men as they got up or as they lay asleep. It looked like a slaughter." (1) Duke, who was not present, says the pickets gave no warning and the trap was sprung on Martin's men. Headley, who was there, states; "The pickets ran by yelling the alarm." (2) The Federal cavalry which was supposed to be in Virginia, or well on its way there as reported by Morgan's scouts, was instead very much in Kentucky. The fight was long and telling with the Confederates losing heavily, but so crippling the Blue Cavalry that pursuit was impossible. Morgan, with the rest of his command, came up and supported the defeated regiments.

On the 10th of June Morgan left Mount Sterling and entered Lexington where some government depots were burned. The next move was to Georgetown and thence to Cynthiana. Here on the 11th a brisk fight took place, but the Gray forces took the town. When the garrison had surrendered, Morgan was

(1) Headley, P., 189

(2) Ibid, P. 198

informed that another force had moved into the outskirts of town. He rode toward them and discovered the Federals with 1,500 men drawn up in a hollow square with the officers mounted in the midst. Morgan put his mounted command of about 1,800 around them and demanded their surrender. They complied and Morgan was surprised to find the commanding General was Hobson who had captured him in Ohio.

"It was now nearly night and General Morgan proceeded to **commit** the first mistake in his hitherto brilliant career" (1) The mistake was camping with 1500 men along a road just thirty miles from Mount Sterling where Burbridge, the Federal General, had 4,000 men.

The Confederates were attacked at daybreak the next morning and **severely** routed. The remnants made their way back to Abingdon, Virginia. (2)

Here Morgan and the command were charged with robbing the Bank of Mount Sterling, Kentucky and undertaking the raid into Kentucky without proper authority. As to the latter charge about all that can be found relating to it is a letter of Senator Benjamin H. Hill, of Georgia, quoted by Lieutenant J.W. Headley of Morgan's Tenth Cavalry;

(1) Headley, P., 198

(2) The Federals' force was 13,11 Cavalry, 35, 45, 40, 26, 30, Mounted Infantry (Speed, p., 239)



"I remember very distinctly many of the facts for the manner as well as matter stated by Mr. Davis(Pres.) was very impressive.'Long ago,'said the President,'I ordered Morgan to make this movement upon Sherman's rear and suggested that his best plan was to go directly from Abingdon through East Tennessee.But Morgan insisted that,if he were permitted to go through Kentucky and around Nashville,he could greatly recruit his horses and his men by volunteers. I yielded and allowed him to have his own way' " (1)

As to the bank robbery charges,little is ever made of them . In the last letter which Morgan wrote he spoke of the charges and said to the Secretary of war,Mr. Seddon,"I will demand a prompt and thorough investigation of them all!" (2)

Morgan's Adjutant-General, J.L. Sanford says, "The determination to pursue and break the General down was apparent to everyone and the Kentucky expedition was to be the means to accomplish this end."(3)

On the 3rd of September,1864,Morgan was at the home of a Mrs. Williams in Greenville,Tennessee. This lady had one son in the Union and one in the Confederate army. A short time before Morgan had discovered there a Union officer recovering from wounds and paroled by the Confederates,attempting to get information through to Union officers of Morgan's presence. The note was

(1)Headley,P.,208

(2) Duke,P.,535

(3) Letter to Basil Duke quoted in History of Morgan's Cavalry.

found in the younger Mrs. Williams' prayer book and Morgan sent the Union soldier under arrest to Abingdon. Asked about her daughter-in-law the elder lady answered that the girl had just ridden off to get some watermelons from the farm.(1)

Morgan had given orders the night before to begin the march toward Bull's Gap at daybreak. Just before dawn Captain Withers reported to him and the order was countermanded in order to give the men time to dry their guns. The new time set for the advance was 7 o'clock. Between daylight and 7 a Federal detachment swept into town and charged the Williams house. Morgan and Major Gassett, along with Withers, tried to reach their horses in the stable, but were cut off. Holland states that they then took shelter under a church on the opposite side of the block from the stables. Withers was sent back to the house to see if there was any avenue of escape and he saw that there was none. Meanwhile the Union troops were breaking in the door of the church above Morgan. He and the two aides dashed for the house and as he ran through the shrubbery a woman shouted, "That's him----that's Morgan over there among the grape vines." (2)

(1) Holland, P. 340, This story also appears in Duke's writing in a letter to Richard Morgan in 1905, April 16. It is also in the manuscripts of Captain Withers.  
(2) Ibid, p., 345

Morgan shouted, "Don't shoot, I surrender!" but was immediately shot down. Duke says only, "General Morgan was killed in the garden - shot through the heart. It is not known whether he surrendered or was offering resistance." (1) The body of Morgan was thrown over a mule and paraded through town until recovered and sent to the Confederate lines by General Gillem commanding the Union troops.

When Morgan went down there was great rejoicing in the North and depression in the South. Vitriolic statements appeared in the Northern newspapers and congratulations were sent to the troops who disposed of him. The South had lost a great leader and a symbol. As Duke puts it, "When he died, the glory and chivalry seemed gone from the struggle, and it became a tedious routine, enjoined by duty, and sustained by sentiments of pride and hatred." (2) "He became one of the romantic figures of the war; and in death as in life he was a symbol of a way of life which ended on a Sabbath morning at Appomattox". (3)

As to his military ability I believe the statement of U.S. Grant sums it up in concrete and ample form;

- (1) Duke, P., 539
- (2) Ibid, P., 540
- (3) Holland, P., 353

"During 1862 and '3, John H. Morgan a partisan officer, of no military education, but possessed of courage and endurance, operated in the rear of the Army of the Ohio in Kentucky and Tennessee.... During the time he was operating in this way he killed, wounded and captured several times the number he ever had under his command at any one time. He destroyed many millions of property in addition. Places he did not attack had to be guarded as if threatened by him." (1)

The death of Morgan was a real blow to the spirit of the Confederacy, but the war moved relentlessly on. Basil Duke was made a Brigadier-General and took command of the remnant of Morgan's Division. This was September 15, 1864.

Under the command of Duke the troops, now hardly more than a brigade, fought on many occasions. At Lick Creek, Carter's Station and Saltville the men did justice to their reputation as soldiers and held the enemy at bay. Excursions were sent into the hill country to round up deserters. But now the fateful year of 1865 had dawned for the Confederacy... the end was not far off. Richmond fell... General A.P. Hill was killed... Lee surrendered... discipline dissolved.

Orders came for all cavalry commanders to march for North Carolina. General Duke describes the scene; " I obtained permission to mount my men on mules. My command

(1) Grant, U.S., Personal Memiors, Vol. II, P. 504.

was about six hundred strong...The rain was falling in torrents when we prepared to start upon a march which seemed fraught with danger. The men were drenched and mounted upon mules without saddles, and with blind bridles or rope halters. Everything conspired to remind them of the gloomy situation....We moved off in silence!" (1)

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet met the cavalry and set out for Alabama to meet Forrest and Taylor. At Abbeville, in South Carolina, a council of war was called. Present were President Davis, Generals Bragg and Breckenridge and the brigade commanders, Ferguson, Debrell, Vaughn, and Duke. The consensus of opinion was that the troops would help Davis escape, but would not continue the struggle against unbeatable odds. Davis was heart-broken and tried to prevail upon the generals to hold on until the panic had passed. He felt that 2500 men were enough to hold for the present. The council was silent and the President of the Confederacy arose and left the room. The war was over. The troops of John Hunt Morgan had stayed to the end. "There was no humiliation for these men. They had done their part and served faithfully, until there was no longer a cause or a country to serve." (2)

(1) Duke, P., 570

(2) Ibid, P., 578

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